844 poles. A large pot full of water is placed nearby to wash the mother and child. If the confinement is difficult, a woman presses the mother's belly until the child comes out. The baby is received in the arms of another woman who waits beneath the mother. The umbilical cord is severed with a cane shiver, and the afterbirth is buried. Both father and mother abstain from any
846 food for one day. Both stay in their nets "until the loss of blood ceases, that is, often for several days." There are no food absten-
[843] tions for the future parents prior to the birth. For about two years
262 after the birth of the child, the parents give up peanuts and
784 bananas. In addition, the father frequently abstains from those animal foods that are never eaten by the woman, especially tapir, marsh deer, rhea, and alligator, until the child is almost six years
[756] old. Only if he is a shaman may he eat of everything. The wife of a shaman, however, does not share this privilege.

The Tapirapé believe that the child will die if these absten-
[761] tions are not observed. They say that in this case death would not be caused by an evil sorcerer, as they usually believe, but by the food that should not be consumed and that turns evil when it is eaten. And they add that in such cases the Whites have many medicines that might save the child, while the Tapirapé do not have any, and so among them the child would be lost. [123:54] When I offered them deer meat, which is coveted by all Tampiitaua men (perhaps because it is a type of game that, although abundant, is seldom killed without firearms), it was not accepted by the fathers of one-year-old children. Even Urukumy who, as a shaman, could have eaten the meat, was careful to pass it on to someone else after courteously accepting it from me.

The abstention from bananas and peanuts is impressive when we consider the important role played by these foods in the Tapirapé
[165] diet. It is possible that the high mortality among children during the first two years of life may have led to such onerous rules.
[755] Actually, these Indians assert that their Karajá neighbors and the Whites eat of anything when their child is ill, while Tapirapé parents, in such cases, subsist exclusively on mahioc flour and maize and manioc cauí, even when the child is older than six.

171 The behavior of Indian parents toward the newborn recalls to
946 some extent a custom of the colonists of São Bonifácio, in the state of Santa Catarina, who come for the most part from Westphalia.

10: Wagley E-5 (1939-1940)1951 SP22 Tapirapé SP22
Tenetehara SO6



abnormalities. Since there is a low incidence of twins and since in several known cases "abnormal" children have been allowed to live, infanticide has had little or no effect upon Tenetehara population trends. The Tenetehara tell of one or two formulas thought to produce abortion. The long taboos imposed on both parents during the pregnancy of the mother and during the early infancy of the child are a source of irritation and discomfort which would seem to tend to discourage large families. But, in general, there is little planned effort among the Tenetehara to limit family size. Men seem proud of several children; women are eager to bear children and they will leave a husband whom they believe to be sterile.

In contrast, the Tapirapé value small families. They take specific steps to limit their families and have explicit ideas as to maximum family size. Not only do the Tapirapé bury twins at birth as do the Tenetehara (and for similar reasons) but they believe that a woman should not have more than three live children. (5) In addition, the three children of a woman should not be of the same sex. In other words, if a woman has two living daughters and her third child is also a girl, it is usually buried at birth. Similarly, if she has two male children and her third is a male, infanticide is in order. Furthermore, all men who have sexual relations with a woman during her pregnancy are considered fathers to her child. More than two co-fathers leads to complications. All co-fathers are expected to observe taboos on sexual relations and on the eating of certain meats during the pregnancy of the woman and the early infancy of the child. If there are three, four, or more co—fathers one of them is certain to break these taboos thus endangering the health of the infant; consequently the woman is urged to bury the child. (6)

On an overt level, the Tapirapé justify these checks on population by saying, "We do not want thin children" or "They would be hungry". They enlarge upon such statements by adding that it is difficult for a father to supply a large family with meat from hunting. In aboriginal times, maniac was plentiful and no one lacked the tubers with which to manufacture flour but meat was especially scarce during the rainy season when the forest is partially flooded and the paths to the savanna country are impassable. In addition, a complex set of food taboos make the job of supplying meat for a family more difficult. Children before adolescence are allowed to eat only specific meats and women are prohibited others. When a Tapirapé says "I am hungry" he generally means by implication:

(5) Baldus (1948) vol. CXXIII, p. 55, was told the same regarding the limitation of number of children of the Tapirapé family, but the contrary in relation to twins. According to information given to him by these Indians, the Tapirapé appreciate twins and, therefore, husband and wife eat twin or double bananas, i. e., with two fruits in the same peel.

(6) Genealogies indicated that these rules are adhered to almost without exception. In 1939, during my residence in a Tapirapé village, one woman hesitated in allowing her third male child to the buried. Less than a month after its birth, she appeared one day without the infant and announced that he had died of a cold. Another woman whose child had four fathers allowed the child to live only to have it die of an intestinal disorder. The villagers took a definite el - told - you - so attitude.

12: Wagley & Galvão E-5 (1939-1940)1948
SP22 Tapirape SP22



601 [182] [611] **Kinship.**—Kinship is more important in furthering solidarity among the *Tapirapé* than either the moieties or the feast groups. *Tapirapé* kinship is bilateral, its chief principle being that all cousins, whether cross- or parallel-cousins, no matter how distant, are considered brothers and sisters. Children of people calling each other siblings are also called siblings. Mother's sisters are called mother, and father's brothers, father. Mother's brothers and father's sisters are distinguished by special terms. Similarly, a man's brothers' children are considered his sons and daughters, and a woman's sisters' children are her children. Children of a man's sisters or a woman's brothers are given special terms.

[621] [178] The wide inclusiveness of kinship affiliation makes it possible for an individual to call the majority of his fellow villagers—and in former days many people in other villages—by terms of close relationship.

554 581 597 592 An older man of some prestige gathers around him by adoption as many "daughters" or as many of his wife's "daughters" as possible. By the marriage of these "daughters," he attracts a group of younger men within his household who contribute constantly to his larder through the hunt and garden activities. At present, only three of the nine houses in the village were formed in this way, but reduced numbers, we were told, forced various combinations of relatives to share a household.

## LIFE CYCLE

842 **Childbirth.**—Although aware that pregnancy is brought about by sexual intercourse, the *Tapirapé* believe that conception takes place when a shaman, serving as intermediary, brings a "child spirit" to the woman. Thunder, night, monkeys, wild pigs, and various fish and insects are supposed to contain child spirits.

843 When the woman is certain that she is pregnant, she tells her husband. They both paint their bodies with genipa and cover their hair with urucú. During the first few days of pregnancy, no restraints are imposed upon the child's parents, but as birth approaches, all sexual contact must cease. [851] All men who have sexual relations with a woman during her pregnancy are considered fathers of the future child, together with the real father.

844 At childbirth the woman is assisted by her mother and sister and by two male relatives. The husband retires to his hammock and is forbidden to partake of any liquid refreshment.

847 Infanticide is practiced because it is considered bad to have more than three children, or two children of the same sex. The fourth child, or third of the same sex, of one mother is buried in a hole dug inside the residence for the afterbirth.

852 304 851 262 On the day after birth, a male child has his lower lip perforated. Until the child is weaned, the parents must refrain from sexual relations and must not eat salt, sugar, honey, or the meat of various animals and forest fowls. Both boys and girls also are restricted in their meat diet. A son

Tapirapé village which he would have hesitated to relate on home grounds. He told me of adulterous affairs in process and of the growing determination among one group of kinsmen to assassinate Urukumu, the powerful medicine man, because they suspected him of performing death-dealing sorcery.

After two weeks in Furo de Pedra, I found that it would be necessary for Valentim Gomes and me to go to Rio de Janeiro. It was not possible for Champukwi to accompany us and so I arranged for two Brazilian frontiersmen to return him to a point on the Tapirapé River from which he could easily hike to his village in a day. Valentim and I then began our slow trip up the Araguaia River to the motor road and thence to Rio de Janeiro. Two months later, rid of malaria and with a new stock of supplies, we returned to spend the long rainy months from November until the end of May in the Village of the Tapirs. Champukwi was there to welcome us, and he came each day to help repair and enlarge our house. We easily fell into our former friendly relationship, now strengthened by the experience in common of the trip to Furo de Pedra and by the feeling which many anthropologists have shared with the people of their communities—that anyone who returns is an "old friend."

My return to the village that November marked, in a sense, the end of what might be called the first phase of my relationship with Champukwi as friend and as anthropological informant. During the course of at least 200 hours of conversation (many of which may be methodologically dignified as interviews), I had learned much about Champukwi as a person as well as about Tapirapé culture. I knew that as a small boy he had come from Fish Village, where his parents had died, to live in the Village of the Tapirs. He had lived with his father's younger brother, Kamaira, who was the leader of a large household. He even confided to me his boyhood name; Tapirapé change their names several times during their lifetimes and mention of a person's first childhood name, generally that of a fish, an animal, or simply descriptive of some personal characteristic, causes laughter among the audience and considerable embarrassment to the individual. I knew that Champukwi had been married before he took his current wife, and that his first wife had died in childbirth. He revealed that her kinsmen had gossiped that her death was caused by his lack of respect for the food taboos imposed

upon an expectant father. This same set of taboos now bothered him again. A series of foods, mainly meats and particularly venison, is prohibited to fathers of infants and to husbands of pregnant women. On two excursions to the savanna (which abounds with deer) Champukwi had eaten venison. Moreover, since the Tapirapé identified cattle with deer, and thus beef with venison, he had broken the taboo several additional times by partaking also of this forbidden meat. The rather scrawny conditon of his 2-year-old daughter, he feared, resulted from his faults. Just after our return to the village in early November, his wife gave birth to a second daughter. She had a difficult delivery, and he remembered his transgressions. Several village gossips, without knowing anything about his misdeeds, had nevertheless accused him of this breach of taboo.

Champukwi's home life was not a happy one. He was frequently in conflict with his second wife, who had, indeed, considerable basis for complaint. She could not claim that he was a poor provider, for Champukwi was a good hunter and a diligent gardener. But he confided to me that he did not find her attractive, or at least not as attractive as other women in the village. Champukwi had a lusty sense of humor and enjoyed joking with Valentim and me. In this mood he told of his many extramarital affairs, which were in truth but slightly concealed. I would in any event have heard of these liaisons; he gave his paramours beads which everyone in the village knew I had given him as presents. This practice caused trouble for the women because their husbands could readily identify the source of the gifts. It also created trouble for Champukwi at home. His wife complained of his affairs and on one occasion, according to Champukwi, she attacked him, grabbing him by his pigtail and squeezing his exposed testicles until he fell helpless into a hammock. On other occasions, she retaliated in a manner more usual for a Tapirapé woman—she simply refused to carry drinking water from the creek, to cook food for him, and to allow him to sleep in the hammock which she and Champukwi shared. For a Tapirapé man to carry drinking water, to cook, or to sleep on a mat is considered ridiculously funny. In other circumstances, Champukwi would have had to seek recourse with a female relative. However, to do so would be tantamount to a public announcement of his marital difficulties; the whole village would have known, to their considerable merriment and jest. But having *tori*[1]friends in the village, Champukwi

[1] [i.e. non-Indian -- Analyst]